



# Safe Routes to School Arrival/Dismissal Observations

**Dallin School**  
**185 Florence Street**  
**Arlington, Massachusetts 02476**

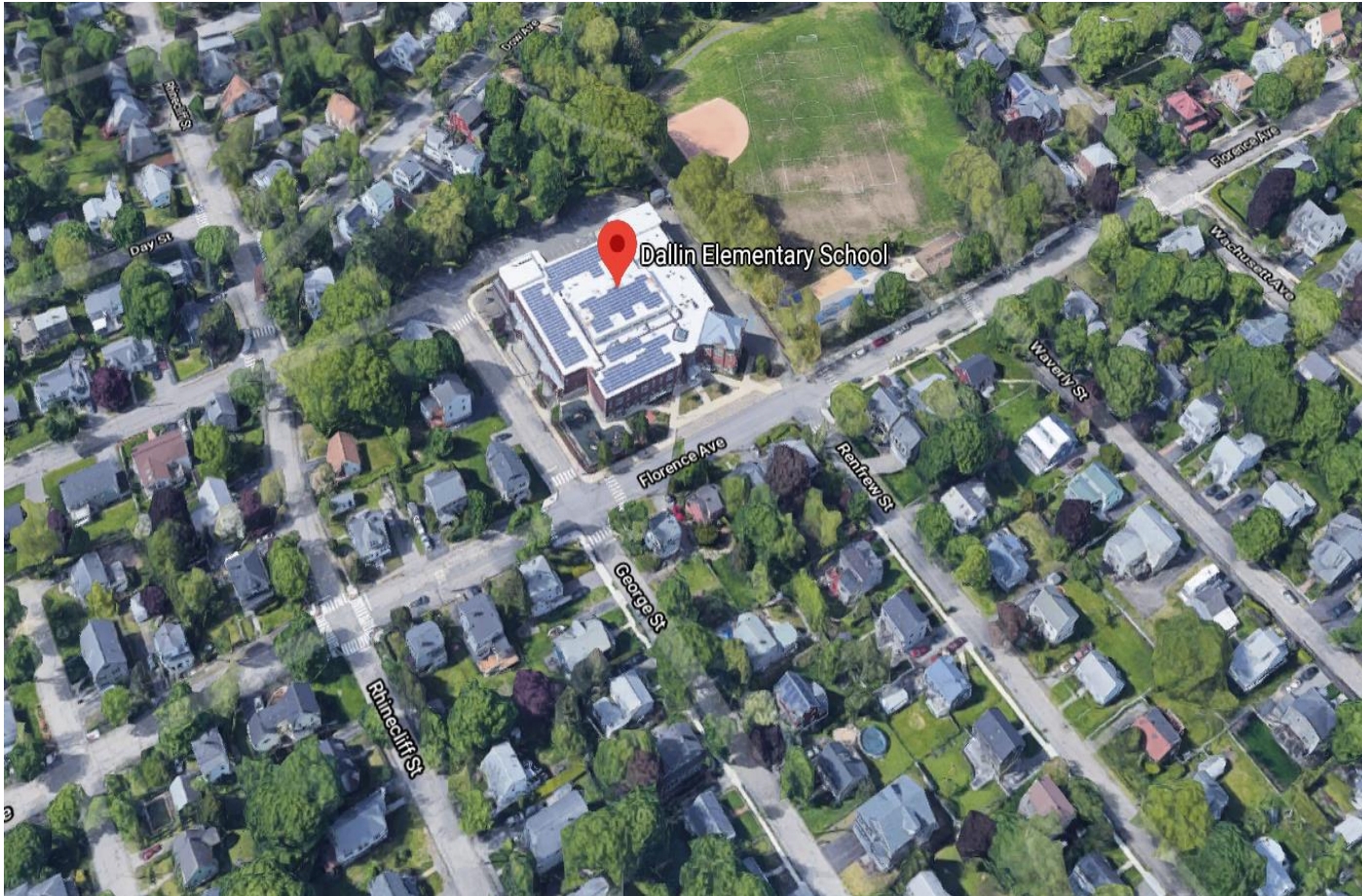
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**November 2020**  
**Judith Crocker, Senior Outreach Coordinator**

# Arrival/Dismissal Details

**Date:** November 5, 2020, sunny, and 52-69 degrees Fahrenheit

**Observations:** 7:45 AM and 1:20 PM



<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Dallin+Elementary+School/@42.4179793,-71.1863999,17z/data=!4m5!3m4!1s0x0:0x7a443b3a76b10ccc!8m2!3d42.41771!4d-71.187859>



Grades: K-5

Enrollment: 472

Opened: 1997

Hybrid In-Person School Hours:

~ 8:10 AM to 1:45 PM – all days except Wednesday

~ 8:10 AM to 1 PM - Remote Wednesdays

Busing with mileage requirements:

- Living 2.0 miles from school





# Dallin School Website Resources

“Walking Safety for Schools,” is listed on the main page of the school’s website under the *Welcome to Dallin* menu:

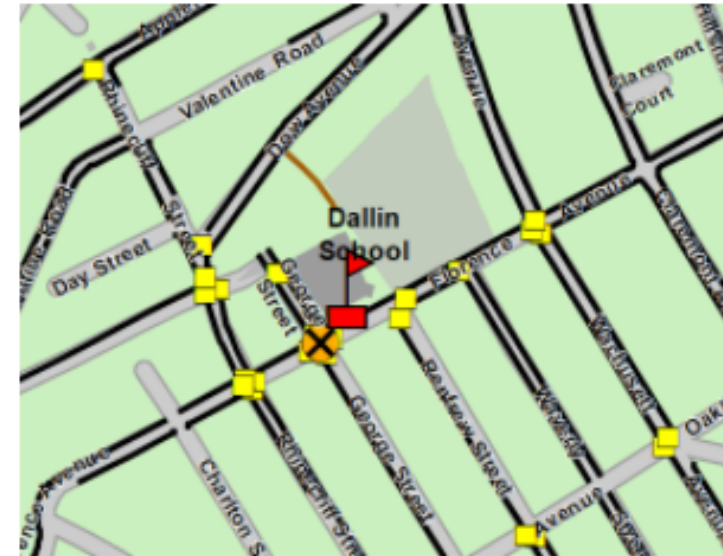
## Walking Safety for Schools

The maps provided on this page are intended to serve as a guide to help students and families identify preferred walking routes to school.

In addition to the interactive map links below, you may also download a pdf of the **All School Districts** map which contains a map for each elementary school district and includes sidewalk, crosswalk, and crossing guard locations.

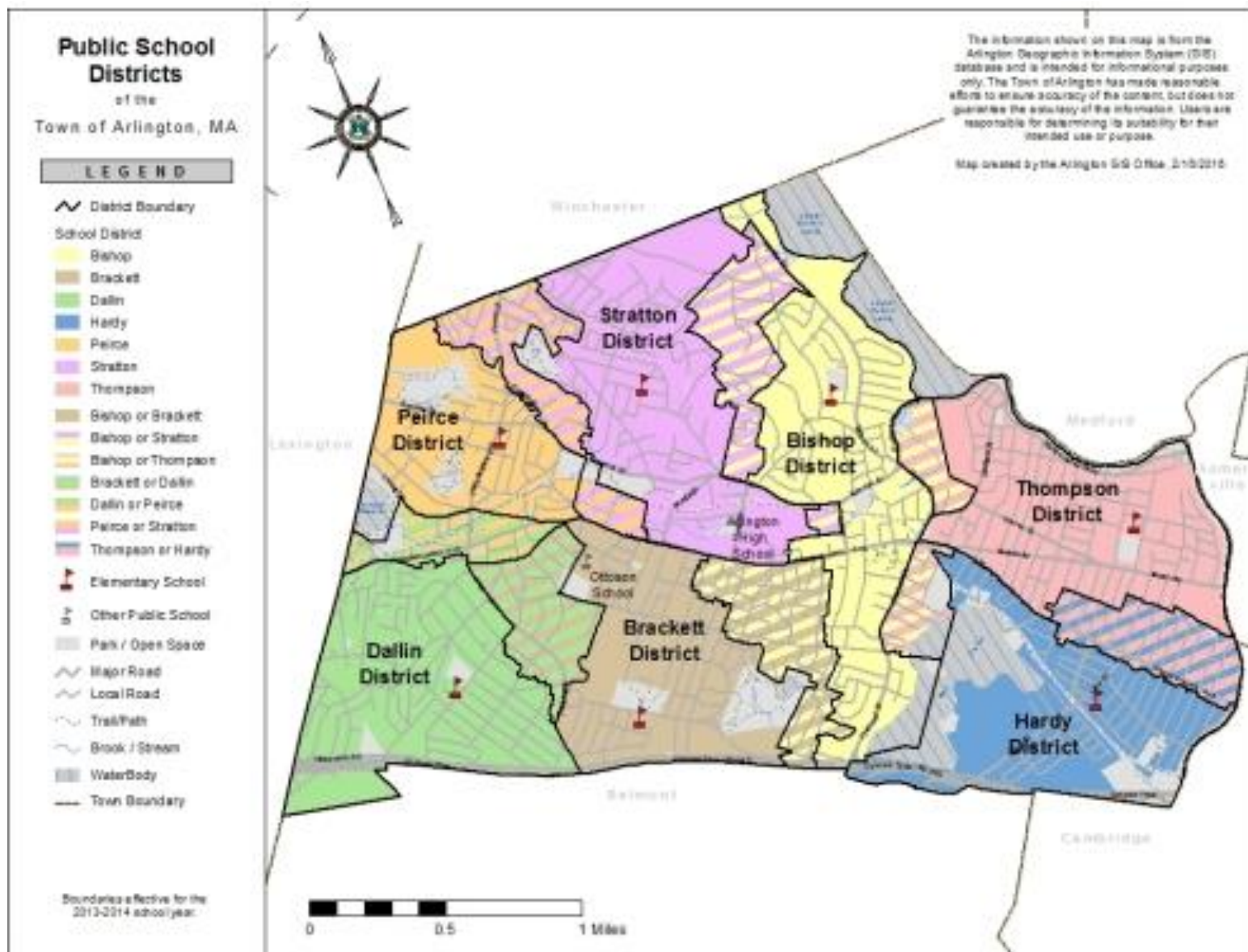
### INTERACTIVE MAPS

- **All School Districts**
- **Dallin Elementary School**



<http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/dallin/walkingsafety.asp>

# Arlington Public Schools Attendance Areas/District Maps



Arlington's neighborhood school model uses open enrollment and buffer zones in determining student attendance.

# Current Arrival/Dismissal Procedures

As listed in the Dallin School website under FAQ: <http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/dallin/pdfs/dallinfaqs.pdf>

## Where and how do I drop off my child?

This year Dallin has only one crossing guard, so it is crucial that families dropping off students in the morning follow the [Walking safety for Schools](#). %

To use curbside drop-off: %

- Pull up in front of the school.
- After the parent or student volunteer has waved you forward to the first spot, he or she will help your child exit the car (ideally, on the school side, not the street side).
- Once your child is safely on the curb, please drive away, checking carefully for pedestrians in front of the school.

## NOTES:

- There is no drop-off in front of the kindergarten. For the safest traffic flow during drop-off hours, please drive northbound on George Street and do not turn around.
- Please do not linger in the drop-off area for more time than it takes for your child to get out safely. If you need to speak with someone at the school, please find a safe parking space and park your car.
- Please do not drop off students across from the school, forcing children to cross traffic.

**IMPORTANT: Idling in front of a school zone is illegal. Please make sure that you turn off your engine when parked at Dallin Elementary.**

## Are there safety guidelines for students walking to school?

Yes-and students are strongly encouraged to walk to school. Information about safe routes to school is posted on the [Dallin website](#).

Particularly now that Dallin is down to one crossing guard, please encourage your children to be mindful and to use crosswalks at all times when crossing the street.

Please do not walk along the end of George Street that faces Dow Avenue (at the back of the school). The road is narrow, there are no sidewalks, many cars exit via this road, and it isn't safe for pedestrians.

## What time is pick-up? Where do I pick up my child?

Pick-up is at 2:30pm M. W, Th, F, 1:00pm on Tue. Children are released from the same doors they entered in the morning.

## Where can I park?

There are many places to park near the school. Parents are asked to respect the flow of traffic and park on the side facing Dallin on the following streets:

- Rhinecliff Street
- George Street (south of Florence)
- Renfrew Street
- Waverley Street

These streets are not wide enough for emergency vehicles to get through when cars are parked on both sides.

Where NOT to park, even if it's "just for a second," even if it's pouring rain, even if you've got your baby in the car:

- Adjacent to a yellow or red curb (such as at the main entrance and along George Street next to the Kindergarten entrance)
- Within five feet of a crosswalk
- In a fire lane
- NOTE: The area in front of the kindergarten entrance is a fire lane!
- In a designated "no parking" zone
- In the teachers parking lot



# Observed Arrival/Dismissal Procedures

**Walkers** approached the school from both directions on Florence Street as well as the numerous neighborhood side streets, including the park path that leads to Dow Street. All streets have sidewalks in fair to good condition. The occasional root damage and missing sidewalk section were observed.

**Bicyclists** were not observed.

**Buses** used the striped bump-out in the front of the school. No vans were observed. There is no signage indicating this use.

**Parent/guardians** used the bus lane when buses were not present along with both sides of Florence Street from Rhinecliff Street to Wachusett Street. Signage indicating this use was posted at the bus lane. Some vehicles also used the many side streets.

**The school's side entrances** were used for the entry/exit of all students. The front door was reserved for tardy students and visitors.

- 8:00 AM Students begin to line-up according to grade
  - 8:10 AM Students enter building
  - 9:00 AM School begins
  - 1:45 PM Students dismissed on all days except Wednesday (remote learning day)
- One crossing guard was stationed at Florence/George Streets and had appropriate reflective gear and a hand stop sign. New crosswalk signage is in place.
  - Staff managing bus transportation did not wear reflective gear.
  - There is school zone signage with school hours approaching the school as well as school zone ahead signage.
  - Excessive vehicle idling, student jaywalking, U-turns and three-point turns was observed. Students egressed on both sides of the vehicles and many sat in the back seat. Not all students wore seatbelts. Most parents/guardians adhered to the arrival and dismissal plans.

***See specific Arrival and Dismissal data in Appendix A and B.***

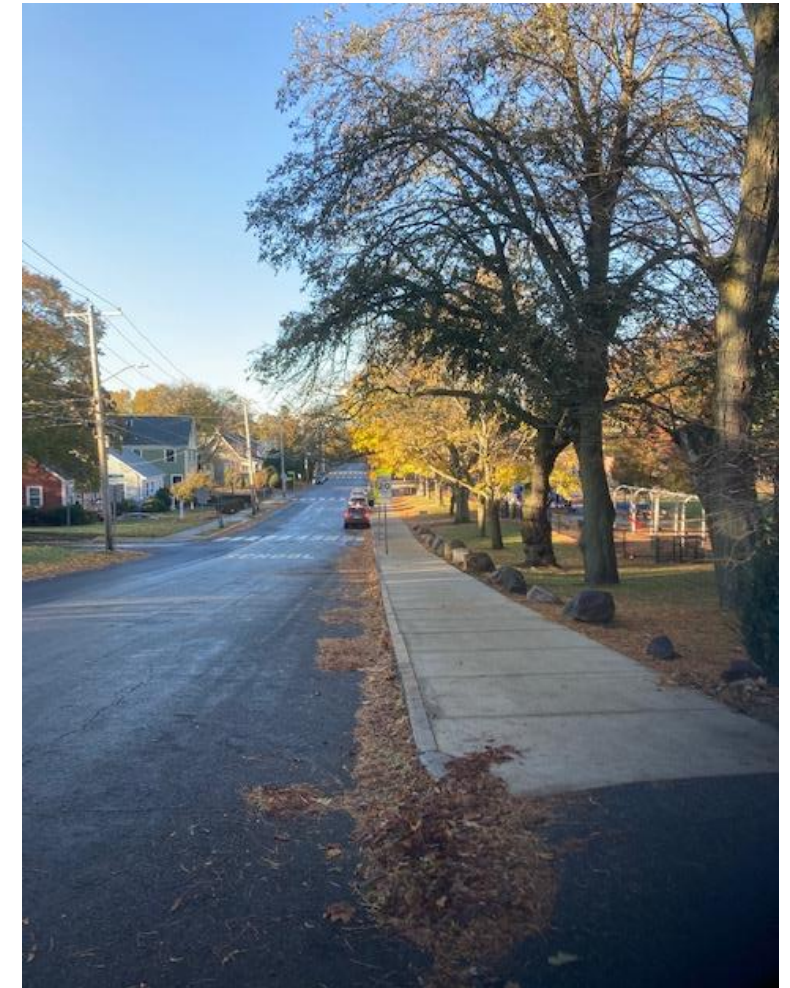
# General Observations: Florence Street



Observed: Indications of the need for neighborhood traffic calming.



Arlington's hilly neighborhoods offer sand for wintery weather.



This long expanse of sidewalk abutting the Florence Street park is recommended as a new family drop-off/pick-up zone.



# General Observations: Signage



School Zone Ahead signage is used throughout the neighborhoods.



Observed: School Zone signage with specific enforceable hours.



“Share the Road” and “No Parking Here to Corner” signage encourages improved pedestrian visibility and bicycle usage on George Street.



# Observations: Bus Lane



Observed: Unlabeled bus lane located in front of the school in the posted Fire Lane.



Student Drop-off and No Idling signage are in two spots next to the bus lane.



Two buses fill the bus lane with the parent queue in the roadway directly behind. Buses did not use their flashing lights when loading/unloading.



# Observations: U-Turns



Observed: a family vehicle making a U-turn on Florence Street in front of the park entrance.

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Observed: a family vehicle making a U-turn in front of the bus lane. Another vehicle is dropping off their student across the street where there is no sidewalk in front of a hydrant.



Observed: a family vehicle making a U-turn on Florence Street past the park.



# Observations: George Street



With parking allowed only on the left side of the street opposite the school, vehicles were observed parking in both directions.



Observed: a faded "No Parking" sign, fire lane and curb pavement markings.



Vehicles encroached the crosswalk near the staff lot.



A family vehicle encroached on the Florence Street crosswalk at George Street.



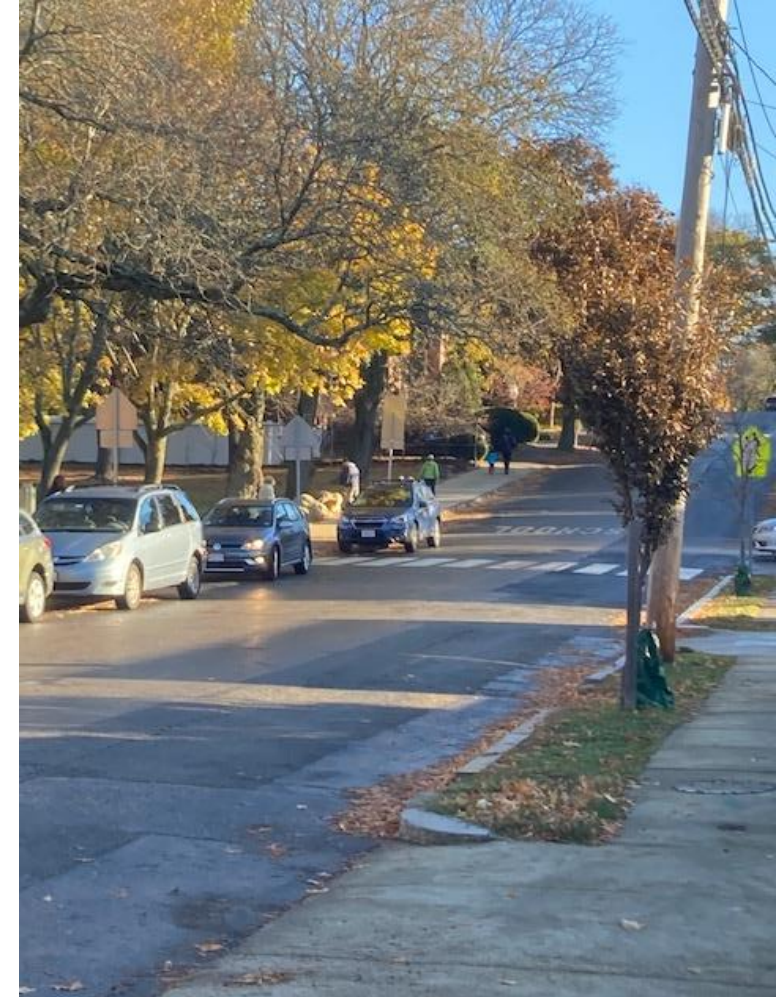
# Arrival Observations: Photos



A family vehicle used the bus lane in the wrong direction.



Observed: a family vehicle unloading behind a bus in the bus lane and a red car unloading on the opposite side of the street in front of a hydrant. This parent/guardian left their car running while unattended to jaywalk their student to the student hardtop area.



School-related vehicles next to the Dallin park encroach on this Florence Street crosswalk.



# Dismissal Observations: Photos



Standing near the Kindergarten entrance to the school, solar glare on Florence/George Streets impairs crosswalk visibility. A car in a private driveway blocks the sidewalk.



A utility pole, tree, and encroaching vehicle cause line-of-sight issues for this crosswalk on Florence Street at George Street.



Observed: Florence/George Streets off-centered crosswalks (top) versus tighter Florence/Rhinecliff Streets crosswalks (bottom)



# Dismissal Observations: Photos



School bus lane/Fire Lane being used for perpendicular parking.

<https://www.google.com/maps/@42.41731,-71.1876102,3a,75y,39.01h,76.4t/data=!3m6!1e1!3m4!1sIJHq7QaUUfQl3CR2iegzfQ!2e0!7i13312!8i6656>



# Arrival & Dismissal Modal Counts

School		ARRIVAL			DISMISSAL	
	Cars	Walkers	Bikers	Cars	Walkers	Bikers
Dallin	44	109	0	75	68	0

## Encouraging More Students to Walk and Bike to School

Given the fair/good condition of Arlington's sidewalks, crosswalks, and the use of crossing guards, we suggest that student walking/biking potential be a school focus. This will in help alleviate the school's family vehicle contribution to local school and neighborhood congestion.

# General Recommendations

## **Safety First**

While most parents/guardians adhered to their school's circulation pattern, rules of the road were sometimes not followed.

- Observations included jaywalking, loading students on both sides of vehicles, elementary students riding in front vehicle seats, and not all students wearing seatbelts
- Road infractions included U-turns and three-point-turns in roadways and private driveways, dropping off/picking up students in roadways, excessive idling, illegal parking, and queueing on public roadways
- Arlington crossing guards have spoken of the need for parent/guardian traffic calming measures and parent/guardian and student education

Improved signage indicating the school's all-modal circulation plan may improve rule clarity that results in more adherence by drivers.



# General Recommendations

## Mitigation Areas

1. Consider making Florence Street between Renfrew and George Streets *Buses Only* during arrival and dismissal. This would allow for buses to load/unload without stopping traffic with their flashers, improve pedestrian safety by eliminating cross traffic at corner crosswalks, and eliminate illegal parking in front of the hydrant. Portable barrels with signage could be used in addition to pole signage. Also, *Left Turn Only* will be needed on Florence at Renfrew and *Right Turn Only* at George.
2. Consider installing *Buses Only* signage and removing Parent drop-off signage in the bus lane.
3. Consider making the section of Florence Street between Renfrew Street and the border of Dallin park the designated family drop-off area.
4. Consider suggesting staff park on the various side streets instead of on Florence Street.
5. Consider making George Street between Florence and Rhinecliff Streets one-way for its entire length (towards Rhinecliff Street). This will decrease vehicle traffic at the primary school Florence/George intersection which is manned by the crossing guard.

## Decreasing Family Vehicle Congestion on School Property

1. Satellite Park and Walk locations could help alleviate some of this parent/guardian congestion while doubling as event parking.
2. Staggered dismissals can work to further separate the modes of student transportation with *true* walkers, bicyclists, and bus riders dismissed first.



# School-Specific Recommendations

## Engineering

1. M.U.T.C.D. *No Idling* signage is needed throughout as most family vehicles idled excessively. Consider joining the MassDEP Green Team to qualify for free signage. <https://thegreenteam.org/>
2. Install appropriate M.U.T.C.D. signage, pavement markings, and informational signage to indicate school circulation patterns on Florence Street. These should include bus areas (*Buses Only*) and perhaps Kindergarten Only entrance. Remove Parent Drop-Off Area signage.
3. Consider installing *No U-Turns* on Florence Street.
4. Consider installing *No Dogs Allowed on School Property* per School Committee policy.
5. Consider installing *No Parking Here to Corner or paint curbing yellow* on Wachusett, Waverly, Renfrew, George, and Rhinecliff Streets where they meet Florence St and near Florence Street crosswalks. This will improve the line-of-sight near crosswalks and intersections.
6. Work with the City to make Florence Street between Renfrew and George Streets *Do Not Enter/School Buses Only During arrival/dismissal*. This will allow buses to legally load/unload without using their flashers, quiet two-way traffic in the area, and improve line-of-sight for pedestrians/bicyclists. Use portable barrels or flexposts in the roadway to reinforce signage. *Right Turn Only During arrival/dismissal hours* signage will be needed on Renfrew at Florence Streets and on Florence at George Street. Similarly, *Left Turn Only During arrival/dismissal* signage will be needed on Florence at Renfrew Street and at George at Florence Street.

# School-Specific Recommendations

## Engineering

8. Consider identifying a parent drop-off/pick-up area along Florence along the park by using signage and/or painting the curbing to differentiate it from the bus lane. For example, the City of Newton does this and calls this area the Blue Zone.  
<https://www.newton.k12.ma.us/Page/809>
9. Consider using instructional circulation signage (sandwich boards or metal signage) that can help inform those in the parent queue area to move all the way forward.
9. Consider having those staff who do not fit in the staff parking lot park on designated streets, such as Waverly and Renfrew Streets.
10. Handicapped Parking signage is needed near the school entrances.
11. Consider using elements of tactical urbanism as a traffic calming mechanism to slow traffic and make the area more inviting for pedestrians. Currently, family members crowd the sidewalk and area near the bus loading/unloading area. Examples include:
  - Develop the school's pedestrian plaza into a welcoming gateway to the school by painting a ground or wall mural and/or adding benches and tables. Consider adding bike racks.
  - Paint Florence between George and Renfrew Streets to reinforce that it is for buses only during arrival/dismissal times.
12. Consider replace faded signage.



# School-Specific Recommendations

## Education

1. Educate students and parents/guardians on safe student passenger delivery: egressing on the passenger side of a vehicle only, seatbelt use, and passenger front seat use. Students should not unbuckle while in the queue lines and parents/guardians should not leave their cars to unbuckle their students or depart prior to students being buckled. Backpacks should be removed prior to buckling.
2. Educate students, parents/guardians, and staff on jaywalking, the proper use of crosswalks, and safe negotiation of parking lots through student bike and pedestrian safety curriculum.
3. Educate students and parents/guardians on helmet use for youth under age 16 and rules of the road. <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-law-about-bicycles#massachusetts-laws->
4. Educate parents/guardians to place their car in park and to totally close car doors prior to departing when dropping-off/picking-up their students.
5. Educate parent/guardians not to drop-off their students on public roadways.
6. Design a customized all-modal arrival/dismissal plan that includes a map, text, and school hours. Be specific with expectations for the different grade levels in drop-off and pick-up procedures.

# School-Specific Recommendations

## Education

7. Publish the all-modal school traffic plan – include in/distribute to: school e-newsletters, summer school mailing, school handbook, school website, local police and crossing guards.
8. Discuss school arrival/dismissal plans and being a good neighbor twice per school year in the principal's newsletter.
9. Add Safe Routes to School policy language to existing wellness and/or transportation policies.
10. Educate parents on Massachusetts Hands Free Law, which took effect February 2020.  
<https://malegislature.gov/laws/generallaws/parti/titlexiv/chapter90/section12a>
11. Educate parents on Massachusetts idling laws and environmental impacts. Consider joining the MassDEP Green Team to qualify for free signage and refer to their website for literature and curricula. <https://thegreenteam.org/>



# School-Specific Recommendations

## Engagement

1. All staff associated with arrival and dismissal should wear reflective OSHA vests.
2. Install M.U.T.C.D. signage on school property as only M.U.T.C.D. signage is enforceable.
3. Enforce No Idling on school property through education, signage, and Safe Routes lawn signs. This can be accomplished by educating both students and parents. A fun way to accomplish this is to have a student art contest with the theme of No Idling. Print the art four to a page with the reverse citing the state law or school circulation plan, also four to a page. Print on green colored paper, cut the paper into fours, and distribute in the queue line and elsewhere. The artwork can also be put on display in the school. (MGL, Ch 90, section 16A, 310 of CMR, section 7.11 and MGL, CH 111, sections 142A-142M).
4. Work with the local police to enforce to provide periodic traffic enforcement near the school. This includes enforcing No Parking, No Idling, School Buses Only, Fire Lane, U-Turns, stop signs, and obstructing a fire hydrant.
5. Do not allow queuing on public roadways for this may impede emergency access to the building.
6. Provide crossing guards with the Crossing Guard video and guide available at <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/safe-routes-to-school-enforcement>

# School-Specific Recommendations

## Evaluation

1. Update Dallin's walking/biking route map. Develop Park and Walk options. This may help alleviate vehicle volume on school property by offering parents/guardians/staff the option to park in satellite areas off school property.

## Equity

1. Incorporate resources and opportunities for students of all abilities to participate in the SRTS program.
2. Provide SRTS resources in different languages.
3. Utilize SRTS evaluation methods regularly to help focus SRTS efforts.
4. Reach out to key community and government stakeholders to create sustainable change.
5. Incorporate SRTS curriculum and policy suggestions so that all schools within the district benefit from this programming.



# School-Specific Recommendations

## Encouragement

1. Stagger dismissal times at all schools so that bus riders, walkers, and bicyclists are dismissed first. Separating walkers from family vehicle traffic increases safety.
2. Encourage walking school buses/bicycle trains to promote greater pedestrian activity and less vehicle congestion.
3. Consider themed SRTS walking/biking days beyond flagship days to add to the celebratory fun and increase student engagement.
4. Employ Walk Across America and Walk Across Massachusetts maps to monitor walking distances.
5. Establish a frequent walker/bicyclist program that rewards students who walk/bike to school a certain amount of times. Rewards could include stickers or extra recess.
6. Support student participation in the SRTS Annual Yard Sign Contest.
7. Form a SRTS Task Force.

# Resources

## **Massachusetts Safe Routes to School**

<https://www.mass.gov/safe-routes-to-school>

## **Safe Routes to School National Partnership**

The Safe Routes Partnership is a national nonprofit organization working to advance safe walking and rolling to and from schools and in everyday life, improving the health and well-being of people of all races, income levels, and abilities, and building healthy, thriving communities for everyone.

<https://www.saferoutespartnership.org/>

## **MassDOT Municipal Resource Guide for Walkability**

MassDOT created this Guide to help municipalities address some of the most common questions and challenges regarding walkability.

[https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2018/09/17/MunicipalResourcesGuideForWalkability\\_2018-08-24.pdf](https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2018/09/17/MunicipalResourcesGuideForWalkability_2018-08-24.pdf)

## **MassDOT Complete Streets Program**

The MassDOT Complete Streets Funding Program provides technical assistance and construction funding to eligible municipalities. Eligible municipalities must pass a Complete Streets Policy and develop a Prioritization Plan. All Program news, guidance, and registration information are available through an online Portal.

<https://www.mass.gov/complete-streets-funding-program>

## **MassTrails Grants**

MassTrails provides matching grants to communities, public entities and non-profit organizations to design, create, and maintain the diverse network of trails, trail systems, and trails experiences used and enjoyed by Massachusetts residents and visitors. Applications are accepted annually for a variety of well-planned trail projects benefiting communities across the state.

<https://www.mass.gov/guides/masstrails-grants>

## **Traffic Safety Grants**

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/traffic-safety-grants>

## **Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection's Green Team**

THE GREEN TEAM is an interactive educational program that empowers students and teachers to help the environment through waste reduction, recycling, composting, energy conservation and pollution prevention. Participating classes receive certificates of recognition and are eligible to win awards.

<https://thegreenteam.org/>

## **Manuel Uniform Traffic Calming Devices**

The Federal Highway Administration's guide to traffic control devices for all public streets, highways, bikeways, and private roads open to public travel.

<https://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/>

## **Massachusetts Anti-Idling Law**

This state law outlines that any vehicle idling for more than five minutes is excessive. Many Massachusetts communities have stricter local by-laws.

<https://malegislature.gov/laws/generallaws/parti/titlexiv/chapter90/section16a>

## **Massachusetts Bicycle Laws**

These laws require following rules of the road and helmet use for youth aged 16 or younger.

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-law-about-bicycles#massachusetts-laws->

## **Massachusetts Handsfree Law**

<https://malegislature.gov/laws/generallaws/parti/titlexiv/chapter90/section12a>

## **Massachusetts School Zone Law**

A school zone is defined as a 300 feet radius of the real property comprising a school property.

<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXV/Chapter94c/Section32j>



# Appendix A: Arrival Observations

- 7:45 AM - The first family vehicle arrived, dropped their student, and made a U-Turn to exit the area. Six staff vehicles were parked on Florence in front of the park and another three on Florence opposite the school. Two walkers were observed. Crossing guard arrives.
  - 7:50 AM - Ten walkers were observed.
  - 8:00 AM - 16 walkers were observed, and three family vehicles dropped off students.
  - 8:03 AM - The first bus arrived and unloaded without using its flashers. A family vehicle dropped-off in the bus lane directly behind the bus.
  - 8:05 AM - 46 walkers were observed. Two family vehicles dropped off in front of the hardtop area. The second bus arrived. Students queued on the hardtop.
  - 8:08 AM – A school bell rang. Ten additional walkers arrive, and two-family vehicles dropped on opposite the school on Florence. The latter students jaywalked with and without adults to cross the street..
  - 8:10 AM – 30 family vehicles dropped off students on Florence, Waverly, Rhenfrew, George, and Rhinecliff Streets as well as in the bus lane after the last bus departed at 8:13 AM. 25 additional walkers arrived. Six U-Turns and illegal parking in front of a hydrant located opposite the school were observed. Students entered the building.
  - 8:14 AM – Parents of walkers depart. Crossing guard departs.
  - 8:20 AM – The last walker arrived, and two-family vehicles are in the bus lane unattended.
- 
- Some students exited their family vehicles on the driver's side.
  - Only a few parents/guardians exited their cars for drop-off.
  - Four dogs were observed.
  - Eight U-Turns were observed.
  - Traffic was observed passing unloading buses.

# Appendix B: Dismissal Observations

- 1:20 PM - Four family vehicles queued on Waverly and four on Florence in front of the park. On Florence opposite the school, two vehicles queued opposite the park (posted No Parking) and three opposite the school. Five family vehicles were observed on Renfrew and two on George. All vehicles idled excessively.
- 1:30 PM - Vehicles queued on Florence and encroached on George Street crosswalks and those abutting the park. Six more vehicles parked and waited. A few walking parents waited. The crossing guard arrived.
- 1:35 PM – The queue continued to grow on Waverly, George, Florence (in both directions from the school), and in front of the hydrant.
- 1:40 PM – Most parents left their vehicles and waited on the playground and abutting sidewalk for their students, totaling about 28 additional adults. The family vehicle queue on Florence between the school and Wachusett was filled at 1:41 PM.
- 1:46 PM - Students were dismissed. A vehicle parked in front of the hydrant left the vehicle running and crossed the Florence to collect their student. Staff was observed in the hardtop without reflective vests.
- 1:50 PM – Eight vehicles remained parked on Florence abutting the park and three after George Street. The queue on Florence opposite the park dropped to three vehicles.
- 2:15 PM - The crossing guard departs. The first bus arrives and loads without using its flashers.
- Five students were observed loading into waiting vehicles who left the area before students had seatbelts fastened.
- Four dogs were observed.
- Some families remained after school hours on the playground.
- Many queued vehicles on Florence from Wachusett were observed taking lefts onto Renfrew and Waverly to exit the area.